GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1591
ANSWERED ON:11.12.2003
MANUFACTURING WEAPONS BY PRIVATE SECTOR
GANGASANDRA SIDDAPPA BASAVARAJ

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the security experts have voiced concern over the opening up of weapons manufacturing to the private sector;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that it was reported that commercial explosives were used in the recent bomb blasts around the country;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the decision taken by the Centre for allowing private production of lethal munitions such as missiles, torpedoes, guns and ammunition and going with the hands of extremists has been feared by the experts; and

(d) if so, the safeguards being considered in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) & (b): As per available information, no report of any security expert, voicing concern over opening up of weapons manufacturing to the private sector, has been received. However, initial investigations reveal that commercial explosives have been used in some of the recent bomb blasts in the country.

(c) & (d): As per information available, there is no report of experts, who have expressed such fear. However, as per the guidelines issued by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, in connection with grant of licence for manufacture of arms and ammunition required for defence sector, the Government has incorporated adequate safeguards to ensure that the production and sale of arms & ammunition by private manufacturers under licence is monitored by the Ministry of Defence and no sale can be undertaken without the prior approval of the Ministry of Defence.